General Assembly

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Fifty-eighth session
Agenda item 40 (*a*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/58/L.39 and Add.1)*]

58/114. Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the guiding principles contained in the annex thereto, other relevant General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions and agreed conclusions of the Council,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,[1]

Taking note also of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of implementation of actions described in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change",[2]

Reaffirming the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Recognizing that independence, meaning the autonomy of humanitarian objectives from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented, is also an important guiding principle for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Gravely concerned about the acts of violence against humanitarian personnel and United Nations and its associated personnel, in particular deliberate attacks, which are in violation of international humanitarian law or other international law that may be applicable,

Gravely concerned also about the lack of access by humanitarian personnel to victims of humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflict and in post-conflict situations, in many regions of the world,

Reaffirming the responsibility first and foremost of States to take care of the victims of humanitarian emergencies within their own borders, while recognizing that the magnitude and duration of many emergencies may be beyond the response capacity of many affected countries,

[1] A/58/89-E/2003/85.
[2] A/58/351.

Concerned about the need to mobilize adequate levels of financing for emergency humanitarian assistance,

Emphasizing that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat should benefit from adequate and more predictable funding, while stressing the importance for the Office to continue to make efforts to broaden its donor base,

Recognizing the importance of humanitarian assistance in ensuring the effective transition from conflict to peace and in preventing the recurrence of armed conflict, and that humanitarian assistance must be provided in ways that will be supportive of recovery and long-term development,

Recognizing also the importance of adequate assistance in the transition from relief to development,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the outcome of the sixth humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council, during its substantive session of 2003;

2. *Welcomes* the appointment of the new Emergency Relief Coordinator, encourages the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to continue its efforts to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, including through the Consolidated Appeal Process, and calls upon relevant United Nations organizations as well as other humanitarian and development actors to work with the Office in enhancing the coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance;

3. *Stresses* the need to increase in an incremental way, in the normal course of the budget process, the share of the budget of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs borne by the United Nations regular budget;

4. *Emphasizes* the importance of the discussion of humaritarian policies and activities in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;

5. *Calls upon* relevant organizations of the United Nations system, other relevant international organizations, Governments and non-governmental organizations to cooperate with the Secretary-General and the Emergency Relief Coordinator to ensure timely implementation of and follow-up to resolutions of the Economic and Social Council adopted at the humanitarian affairs segment of its substantive session;

6. *Encourages* the Economic and Social Council to consider the issue of the transition from relief to development in an integrated manner, through a possible joint meeting of the humanitarian and operational segments, during its substantive session in the near future, in view of the importance of getting humanitarian and development organizations, including international and regional financial institutions and non-governmental organizations, to discuss and review more fully the implications of the transition from relief to development in their programming, and invites the Council to take into account, inter alia, the work in progress by the United Nations system to clarify its role in post-conflict transition situations as well as other relevant information in its consideration;

7. *Strongly condemns* all forms of violence to which humanitarian personnel and United Nations and its associated personnel are increasingly subjected, as well as any act or failure to act, contrary to international law, which obstructs or prevents humanitarian personnel and United Nations and its associated personnel from discharging their humanitarian functions;

8. *Urges* all States to take necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and its associated personnel;

9. *Reaffirms* the leading role of civilian organizations in implementing humanitarian assistance, particularly in areas affected by conflicts, affirms the need, in situations where military capacity and assets are used to support the implementation of humanitarian assistance, for their use to be in conformity with international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, and in this regard takes note of the 2003 "Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies",[3] as well as of the 1994 "Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief";[4]

10. *Calls upon* all Governments and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflicts and in post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel as well as supplies and equipment in order to allow them to perform efficiently their task of assisting the affected civilian population, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

11. *Encourages* Member States with internally displaced persons to develop or strengthen, as appropriate, national laws, policies and minimum standards on internal displacement, inter alia, taking into account the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,[5] and to continue to work with humanitarian agencies in endeavours to provide a more predictable response to the needs of internally displaced persons, and in this regard calls for international support, upon request, to capacity-building efforts of Governments;

12. *Reaffirms* the obligation of all States and parties to an armed conflict to protect civilians in armed conflicts in accordance with international humanitarian law, and invites States to promote a culture of protection, taking into account the particular needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;

13. *Welcomes* the continued efforts to address the issue of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the context of humanitarian crises, and notes with interest the bulletin of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse;[6]

14. *Encourages* the donor community to improve its response to humanitarian emergencies through policies and practices of good donorship, together with mechanisms for their review, and welcomes steps taken in this direction;

15. *Calls upon* relevant United Nations organizations to improve and increase consistency in the way in which humanitarian needs are assessed;

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[3] See www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf.

[4] Department of Humanitarian Affairs, document DHA/94/95.

[5] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

[6] ST/SGB/2003/13.

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2004, on progress made in strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, including the implementation of and follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/5 of 15 July 2003.

75th plenary meeting
17 December 2003